



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE REGULAR  
MEETING OF THE  
LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
HELD IN ROOM 739  
OF THE KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION  
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET,  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012**

**Monday, May 2, 2011**

**10:00 AM**

**ROLL CALL**

Present: Chair Curry, Vice Chair Friedman, Vice Chair Savelle,  
Commissioner Berger, Commissioner Biondi, Commissioner  
Kleinberg, Commissioner McClaney, Commissioner Rudnick,  
Commissioner Trevino-Powell and Commissioner Williams

Excused: Vice Chair Olivas, Commissioner Franzen, Commissioner Kang,  
Commissioner Murray and Commissioner Sorkin

**I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS**

1. Call to order. (11-2021)

**The meeting was called to order by Chair Curry at 10:06 a.m.**

2. Introduction of May 2, 2011, meeting attendees. (11-2022)

**Self-introductions were made.**

3. Approval of Agenda of May 2, 2011. (11-2023)

**On motion of Commissioner Biondi, seconded by Commissioner Williams  
(Commissioners, Franzen, Kang, Murray, Olivas and Sorkin being absent),  
the agenda for May 2, 2011, was unanimously approved.**

4. Approval of the Minutes from April 18, 2011. (11-2024)

**On motion of Commissioner Kleinberg, seconded by Commissioner**

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**Saville (Commissioners, Franzen, Kang, Murray, Olivas and Sorkin being absent), the minutes for April 18, 2011, were continued to May 16, 2011.**

**Attachments:**    [SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS](#)

## **II. REPORTS**

- 5.**     Chair's Report by Patricia Curry, Chair, for May 2, 2011. (11-2025)

**Chair Curry reported the following:**

- **The Commission wished Commissioner Sorkin a speedy recovery. Chair Curry requested the Commissioners to sign and staff to send Commissioner Sorkin a get well card.**
- **Dr. Jackie Contreras was appointed as Interim Director to the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). In addition, the Board of Supervisors (Board) directed County Counsel to prepare an amendment to the County Codes on the interim governance structure to exempt DCFS and Probation from the interim governance structure and place on the May 10, 2011 agenda. In order to change the ordinance for DCFS and the Probation Department (Probation) to report to the Board must vote on the ordinance change two more times.**
- **Dr. Contreras indicated that she strongly advocates filling the current vacancies within DCFS' executive team and the managers who have stepped in to fill the vacancies have done a terrific job while the Department continues its search to fill these vacancies. Below are the individuals who are acting within the vacant positions. Diane Wagner is currently the Acting Deputy Director Deputy Director for Services Bureau I and Service Areas 7 and 8 as well as the Adoptions and Youth Development Services. Dawna Yokoyama is acting as the Deputy Director for Services Bureau IV which includes Service Area 1 and 2 as well as the Community Based Support Divisions. Rhelda Shabazz, Deputy Director of Administrative Services has assumed the duties of Lisa Parrish, Deputy Director of the Bureau of Strategic Management.**

**Chair Curry's verbal report was received and filed.**

- 6.**     DCFS Acting Director's Report by Dr. Jackie Contreras, Chief Deputy Director, DCFS. (11-2027)

**Dr. Contreras reported the following:**

- **The role of DCFS is to ensure the safety of children and help children thrive; DCFS must partner effectively in order to support and strengthen families and communities; and the review of outcomes is essential to determining the what impacts DCFS has made.**
- **DCFS must broadly review safety, permanency and well-being together through the creation of a Data Dashboard. The Data Dashboard is intended to look at safety, permanency and well-being, and identify the outcomes of DCFS. The Data Dashboard also breaks down data to the individual workgroup level. Those workgroups can determine how much time a child has spent in the system compared to other workgroups, offices and eventually across the State and the Nation. DCFS should have within a few months a draft of the Data Dashboard.**
- **DCFS is in the process of developing and completing a presentation on the Title IV-E Waiver (Waiver) to present to all the stakeholders. The intent of the Waiver is to be as transparent as possible and to share information with stakeholders. DCFS has the Waiver extension until June 2013 and has been working with Alameda County and the State on drilling down the outcomes in order to extend the Waiver beyond June 2013. The following are statistics since the Waiver was implemented in July 2007:**
  - **Reduced the number of children in out-of-home care by 21.9 percent.**
  - **Reduced the number of days in placement by 26.5 percent.**
  - **Reduced the number of children in group homes 27.5 percent.**
  - **Increased the number of children receiving Family Maintenance by 35.9 percent.**
  - **Reduced the number of children receiving Permanent Placement services by 32 percent.**
- **Reduced the number of Emergency Response (ER) referrals over 60 days to 1,760. This number represents a 70 percent reduction in ER referrals since a high of 6,200 in July 2010. According to the California State Department of Social Services, 21.4 percent of DCFS' open referrals are over 60 days. Alameda County, which is the only other County in California participating in the Waiver, is at 21.4 percent and the State of California is at 21.7 percent. DCFS is on par with the rest of the State. DCFS is hopeful to complete all backlog referrals over 60 days by June 2011.**

- **DCFS is working with other County departments on Self-Sufficiency and reviewing a re-design of Life Skills services provided to Transition Age Youth (TAY).**

**In response to questions posed by the Commission, Dr. Contreras added the following:**

- **During the last quarter, re-entry following reunification was at 10.7 percent. DCFS is currently at 12.3 percent down from 12.9 percent. The National standard of re-entry following reunification is 9.9 percent; the National average is 15 percent.**
- **DCFS has been internally reviewing the Practice Model. The framework for the Practice Model takes users through the entire system and shows the process DCFS takes to achieve the goals and outcomes desired. DCFS is working on connecting the strategies, ideas, programs, funding streams, and initiatives to the Practice Model framework.**
- **There are a number of factors that led to the large amount of ER referrals over 60 days. DCFS is reviewing its sustainable plan in order to maintain a manageable workload for workers. There were a number of strategies and policies that were put into place that the workforce was unable to maintain and led to unintended consequences. In addition, 20 percent of DCFS workers are on medical leave and although there are legitimate reasons for the medical leave, it is still a very high percentage.**
- **The increase in ER referrals over 60 days is not across the board, some offices had higher numbers than others. DCFS has three offices that account for approximately 50 percent of all ER referrals over 60 days. DCFS has concentrated additional resources to those offices in an effort to reduce their backlog. There are several reasons for this variability; one of them being that there are some offices that may be considered more desirable to work in. These desirable offices usually have more experienced workers or workers with seniority. Consequently, the less experienced workers are contractually allowed to transfer after one year according to the Memorandum of Understanding between DCFS and the union representing social workers. This has resulted in a significant amount of turnover which has impacted the number cases being handled.**

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- The offices with 100 or less ER referrals over 60 days were requested to share their experiences and strategies with the other offices. However, even the offices with zero ER referrals over 60 days, are extremely busy, often necessitating overtime to complete cases.

Chair Curry requested that the Commission have an opportunity to discuss and provide input on the Waiver strategies prior to them being submitted to the Board for approval.

Dr. Contreras stated that nothing has been finalized regarding the Waiver, and the presentation mentioned earlier is still being drafted. Early June would be the best time to have that discussion with the Commission. However, that would be after discussing with the Board Offices and bringing them up to speed.

- DCFS' Risk Management Division is responsible for reporting on child fatalities, near fatalities and critical incidents. However due to the constant barrage of attention, often times the Risk Management Division is moving so quickly allowing them no time to step in and conduct in depth analysis on the Child Fatality report or on an on-going basis.
- DCFS requested the Board extend the Family Preservation Contract for Fiscal Year (FY) 2010-11 and FY 2011-12. The additional funding for this fiscal year will increase the Up-Front Assessments, Alternative Response Services, and Family Preservation Services. This was a retroactive contract, which required approval from the retroactive contract committee. The Board approved the contract with funding for this fiscal year. However, in order to approve the funding for next fiscal year, the Board required several stipulations such as identifying how many families were actually served with the original allocation and the augmentation, and how DCFS is independently evaluating Family Preservation.
- DCFS is currently working the development of new Statement of Work that can look at the continuum of services being provided to be able to issue a Request for Proposal (RFP). The Prevention Initiative Demonstration Project (PIDP) is one of the strategies DCFS has invested in and its outcomes will be included in the Waiver outcome presentation. In addition, DCFS wants to include Partnerships For Families (PFF) in the Waiver. The Department of Probation population is also included in the outcome presentation, copies of those outcomes will be provided to the Commission.

**Dr. Contreras acknowledged the importance of reviewing the outcomes for the programs that are successful, and emphasized the importance of having Prevention become a countywide initiative with the costs being spread amongst the departments.**

**The Commission agreed with Dr. Contreras that Prevention should be a Countywide initiative. The Commission strongly urged DCFS to develop a plan for the next fiscal year.**

**Dr. Contreras' verbal report was received and filed.**

### **III. COMMITTEE/WORKGROUP UPDATES**

- 7. Crossover Youth Workgroup**
- Patricia Curry, Workgroup Chair (11-1580)**

**Chair reported the following:**

- In 2009 Chair Curry received a request from DCFS and Probation to work with Crossover Youth. The goal of the Crossover Youth Workgroup is to prevent youth from crossing over from one system to another. The Crossover Youth Workgroup met with Ms. Maryam Fatemi, Deputy Director, Services Bureau 3, DCFS, Mr. Dave Mitchell, Placement Services Bureau Chief, Probation and Ms. Sharon Harada, Juvenile Field Services Bureau Chief and other representatives from the departments.**
- Ms. Fatemi was able to obtain the informational juvenile traffic court violations (copy on file) information which can be used to identify future problems. In addition, Chair Curry discussed the Crossover Youth Practice Model (copy on file). The Crossover Youth Workgroup discussed the possibility of creating a pilot project to assist youth.**
- The Crossover Youth Workgroup has only met one time this year, due to scheduling conflicts. Chair Curry also stated that she has been extremely busy, and unfortunately will no longer be able to Chair the Crossover Workgroup. Commissioner Biondi volunteered to Chair the Crossover Youth Workgroup. Chair Curry thanked Commissioner Biondi for volunteering, and added that there is really good work being done by Ms. Fatemi, Mr. Mitchell and Ms. Harada; Chair Curry applauds the dedication of not only the workgroup members but DCFS and Probation as a whole for their continued efforts in addressing crossover youth.**

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**Commissioner Biondi added that schools have Probation Officers for youth on probation and that the Juvenile Justice Crime Prevention Act (JJCPA) funds the program. The Probation Officer's role is to intervene with the family and to prevent them from crossing over to Probation.**

**Chair Curry's verbal report was received and filed.**

- 8. Family Reunification Workgroup**
- Helen A. Kleinberg, Workgroup Chair (11-2070)**

**Commissioner Kleinberg reported the following:**

- Reunification began under former DCFS Director Dr. David Sanders. The subsequent workgroup that developed focused on visitations. Visitation is an important part of reunifying families. As a result, a visitation committee was established and through their work and the support of the courts, DCFS established an external reunification unit.**
- Over a long period of time and many committee members, a study was conducted based on the successful reunification of 30 families compared to 30 families that did not successfully reunite. Based on the study, it was determined that DCFS was not reviewing reunification preparedness. In addition, no criteria were established for assessing the readiness of a family to be reunited. After Care Services for reunited families was not available in a timely manner resulting in many families leaving the system without services. Families also needed help transitioning from being away from each other. Much of the re-entries occurred within the first week through the first six months of reunification.**

**Dr. Contreras added that the re-entry data revealed that DCFS has gone from 61.2 percent reunifications within 12 months to 66.9 percent, the National standard is 75.2 percent and the National average is 69.9 percent.**

**Commissioner Kleinberg's report was received and filed.**

- 9. Mental Health Children's Workgroup Update**  
**Genevra Berger, Workgroup Chair**  
**(continued from the meeting of April 18, 2011.) (11-1617)**

**Commissioner Berger's reported the following:**

- **The Mental Health Children's Workgroup will parallel the Mental Health Workgroup and the TAY with an initial concentration on the Katie A. children. Commissioner Berger requested interested Commissioners to join the workgroup. The Workgroup will review what the programs, funding streams, processes for the programs and their outcomes.**
- **Commissioner Berger has several questions that she is hoping representatives from the Department of Mental Health (DMH) and DCFS could answer. Commissioner Berger stated that she has received some data from DMH Director Marvin Southard.**

**Commissioner Kleinberg volunteered to join Commissioner Berger's Mental Health Children's Workgroup.**

**Commissioner Berger's report was received and filed.**

**10. Education Coordinating Council**

- **Helen A. Kleinberg, Commission Representative (11-2051)**

**Commissioner Kleinberg's reported the following:**

- **The Education Coordinating Council (ECC) was created in 2004; the Commission participated in its creation. The ECC's initial push was the sharing of education records for children who have been moved around so much. Michael Nash, Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Courts, has been very concerned about truancy and is working with the truancy taskforce. Supervisor Molina's office began a pilot education program in Pomona, which has been very successful. The pilot project placed social workers on school campuses to serve as education advocates. Although the program has been successful, it is expensive. The ECC is trying to develop a less expensive way to provide education advocacy to youth on campus.**
- **The ECC is headed by Trish Ploehn who has a great deal of knowledge and experience with children and education. Ms. Ploehn has individually met with each ECC member and is in the process of creating of new plan. In addition, there are regularly scheduled meetings with the Superintendents. At the last meeting, they discussed what had taken place at the Challenger Memorial Probation Camp, lawsuit that followed as well as the accreditation of the school.**

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**Commissioner Biondi mentioned that she recently met the new LAUSD Superintendent, Mr. John Deasy and was very impressed and stated Mr. Deasy began his career in juvenile justice.**

**Dr. Contreras informed the Commission of a collaborative effort between First Star and UCLA which offers the First Star UCLA Bruin Guardian Scholars Summer Academy for foster youth interested in attending college. Additional information regarding the program will be forwarded to the Commission.**

**Commissioner Kleinberg's verbal report was received and filed.**

- 11. External Stakeholders Visitation Committee  
Helen A. Kleinberg (11-2102)**

**Commissioner Kleinberg reported the following:**

- The Visitation Committee has not met in a long time due to the departure of Lisa Parrish and the tremendous workload of the current executive team of DCFS.**
- With the help of the Faith-Based Committee, the Reunification Committee has identified several visitation centers which are doing quite well. However, there has been some discussion to what visitation actually means. Visitation should be purposeful. The old visitation system was called "monitor." Many families felt that this was just another opportunity for social workers to scrutinize them. There is a lot known about Reunification and Visitation with great strategies; however, the Committee needs stronger leadership from DCFS.**

**Dr. Contreras stated that although DCFS is in a transition state, she will assign someone to both the Reunification and Visitation Committees and will work with Commissioner Kleinberg to identify some of the issues that require immediate attention.**

**Commissioner Kleinberg's verbal report was received and filed.**

- 12. First 5 LA  
Harriette F. Williams, Commission Representative  
(11-1624)**

**Commissioner Williams reported the following:**

- **First 5 LA has approved a strategic plan through 2015 and has come to an agreement that First 5 LA will have 14 areas of place-based projects. The State of California Budget has severely impacted First 5 LA funding, cutting it in half. The cut accounts to approximately \$424 million. As a result of this cut, First 5 LA had to review its strategic plan to adjust for the loss of funds. First 5 LA has filed a lawsuit against the State to recover the \$424 million.**

**Chair Curry requested that a First 5 LA representative present an in-depth report on First 5 LA at a future Commission meeting. Commissioner Williams will additionally provide the Commission with information regarding the 14 place-based projects that First 5 LA is working on.**

**Commissioner Williams's verbal report was received and filed.**

#### **IV. DISCUSSION**

- 13.** Discussion regarding Commission Committees and Workgroups.  
Chair  
(continued from the meeting of April 18, 2011.) (11-1625)

**Chair Curry reminded Commissioners that are representing the Commission on a Committee or chairing a Committee that the Commission's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2010-11 is forthcoming. Chair Curry requested that Commissioners prepare to submit their written reports when needed.**

**Chair Curry's verbal report was received and filed.**

#### **V. MISCELLANEOUS**

##### **Matters Not Posted**

- 14.** Matters not on the posted agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (11-2049)

**There were none.**

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**Public Comment**

15. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee on items of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Committee. (11-2044)

**No members of the public addressed the Commission.**

**Announcements**

16. Announcements for the meeting of May 2, 2011. (11-2052)

**Chair Curry made the following announcements:**

- **AB 1234 Ethics Training Certification has expired for some Commissioners. Online training and instructor-led classes are available. Commissioners may contact Commission staff to enroll for training.**
- **DMH will host the Transition Age Youth (TAY) Conference on May 17, 2011 at the California Endowment Center for Health Communities.**
- **The 2011 Commissioners' Leadership Conference hosted by the Quality and Productivity Commission will be held on Thursday, May 12, 2011. Commissioners interested in attending may contact Commission Staff.**
- **The United Friends of the Children in partnership with the Board, DCFS, Probation, and the Teague Family Foundation will host the CELEBRATION 2011 Honoring the Academic Achievement of Foster Youth on June 7, 2011. Individuals interested in attending may contact Commission Staff.**
- **The 16th Annual All for the Love of Kids, Awards and Dinner Fundraiser will be held on Thursday, August 4th, 2011, at the LA County Arboretum.**

**Chair Curry's verbal report was received and filed.**

**Adjournment**

17. Adjournment for the meeting of May 2, 2011. (11-2048)

**The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 p.m.**